

Message Text

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ACTION SS-25

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R 181206Z APR 78
FM AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7694
INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY DOHA
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM
AMEMBASSY KUWAIT
AMEMBASSY MANAMA
AMEMBASSY MUSCAT
AMEMBASSY SANA

C O N F I D E N T I A L ABU DHABI 1089

EXDIS

C O R R E C T E D C O P Y (TEXT)

EO 11652: XGDS-1
TAGS: PEPR, TC
SUBJ: ZAYID'S CONCERNS OVER ARAB DISUNITY

1. IN MY APRIL 17 MEETING WITH SHAIKH ZAYID, ALSO ATTENDED BY AL AIN GOVERNOR SHAIKH TAHNUN, MY MENTION OF EVENTS IN MIDDLE EAST COMMENT DESPAIRINGLY ON DIVISIONS IN ARAB WORLD. AFTER I HAD REVIEWED PRINCIPAL POINTS CONTAINED IN STATE 77949 ON PRIMIN BEGIN'S MARCH 21/22 VISIT TO WASHINGTON, ZAYID SAID HE HAD HOPED THAT THERE WOULD BE SOME BENEFIT ACCRUING FROM PRESIDENT SADAT'S VISIT TO ISRAEL. YET ALL HE COULD SEE WAS THAT VISIT HAD ONLY RESULTED IN FURTHER POLARIZATION IN ARAB WORLD. ISRAEL'S POSITION SEEMED TO REMAIN ESSENTIALLY UNCHANGED AND HE FELT THAT ISRAEL'S SUPPORTERS WERE NOW TRYING TO STRING THINGS ALONG TO TAKE AD-
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VANTAGE OF CLEAVAGE THAT EXISTS AMONG ARABS THEMSELVES AS RESULT OF SADAT INITIATIVE. ONLY WAY ARABS COULD REALLY DEAL WITH ISRAELI AGGRESSION AND ARRIVE AT SOME SORT OF SETTLEMENT WAS THROUGH COHESION AND SOLIDARITY. BUT HE PERSONALLY DID NOT SEE THIS COMING ABOUT AND WAS AT A LOSS AS TO WHAT TO DO.

2. ADVERTING TO FORTHCOMING CONFERENCE IN KHARTOUM OF ARAB

LEAGUE SOLIDARITY COMMITTEE(KHARTOUM 1660), ZAYID SHOWED LITTLE OPTIMISM. UAE WOULD BE REPRESENTED AT FOREIGN MINSITER LEVEL BUT HE FRANKLY DID NOT SEE COMMITTEE ACHIEVING MUCH. WHAT GOOD WOULD IT DO, HE ASKED RHETORICALLY, TO HAVE A SUMMIT OF CHIEFS OF STATE ALMOST ENTIRELY FROM ARABIAN PENINSULA? HE SAID HE HAD DISCUSSED THIS MATTER WITH KING KHALID DURING HIS RECENT VISIT TO SAUDI ARABIA..

3. WHEN I MENTIONED THAT AMBASSADOR ATHERTON WOULD BE RETURNING TO CAIRO AND TEL AVIV TO PURSUE OUR EFFORTS TO REACH AGREED DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES FOR AN OVERALL PEACE SETTLEMENT, ZAYID SAID IF ISRAELIS CANNOT ACCEPT EVEN UN RESOLUTION 242 AND SAY THAT "EVERYTHING IS NEGOTIABLE," WHAT KIND OF GENERAL PRINCIPLES CAN BE WORKED OUT? HE REITERATED HIS APPRECIATION FOR WHAT PRESIDENT CARTER WAS SEEKING TO DO. HE HAD DONE MORE THAN ANY OTHER PRESIDENT, BUT U.S. WAS STILL A MAJOR SUPPORTER OF ISRAEL THROUGH ITS ECONOMIC AND MILITARY AID. THIS AID PERMITTED ISRAELIS TO CONTINUE TO MAINTAIN THEIR INTRANSIGENT POSITION REGARDLESS OF PUBLIC DISAGREEMENT BETWEEN PRESIDENT CARTER AND PRIMIN BEGIN ON APPLICABILITY OF RES. 242 TO ALL OCCUPIED TERRITORIES INCLUDING WEST BANK AND GAZA. I TOLD ZAYID THAT IT WAS MY IMPRESSION THAT THERE WAS AN INCREASING RECOGNITION WITHIN AMERICAN PUBLIC, AS REFLECTED BY OPINION POLLS, THAT BEGIN'S UNILATERAL INTERPRETATION OF UN RESOLUTION 242 WOULD NOT WASH. WE HOPED THAT AS ISRAELI GOVERNMENT CONTEMPLATED RESULTS OF MARCH 21-22 MEETING, ITS LEADERSHIP WOULD

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ALSO REACH SAME CONCLUSION.

4. COMMENT: ZAYID SEEMED MORE PESSIMISTIC ABOUT PROSPECTS FOR PEACE THAN EVER BEFORE. THIS MAY REFLECT THE LACK OF OPTIMISM IN MESSAGES HE HAS RECEIVED FROM KING HUSSEIN AND YEMENIS ABOUT PROSPECTS FOR ARAB SUMMIT AS WELL AS HIS TALKS WITH KING KHALID. HIS COMMENTS ON ARAB DIVISIVENESS PERHAPS ALSO WERE ACCENTUATED BY HIS OWN FRUSTRATIONS IN TRYING TO RESOLVE NUMBER OF ISSUES WITHIN UAE DURING HIS RECENT WEEK LONG VISIT TO NORTHERN EMIRATES (ABU DHABI 1033) AND WHICH WILL BE FURTHER REPORTED ON IN SEPTEL.

DICKMAN

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